

scrutiny. The pride and purpose Paul took from being a part of that oversight mechanism were evident in the seriousness with which he approached his work. I am personally grateful to Paul for everything he did on the committee's behalf.

Paul plans to spend his retirement with Margo, the great love of his life, at his side. He intends to travel, read, and walk the woods of the Rock Creek Park where he has found so much comfort and solace over the years. The son of European immigrants, who emigrated himself from Canada when he was 4 years old, Paul's story is a distinctly American one. Everyone who got to play a role in it these past 16 years is better for it.

It gives me great joy to publicly thank Paul for his contributions to the work of the committee, the integrity of congressional oversight, and the security of this great Nation. He has been a credit to what we do from the moment he joined the staff.

Congratulations and best of luck to you in retirement, Paul. Neither your expertise, your good humor, nor your wise counsel will soon be replaced.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JON SIMPSON

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Bentonville Police Chief Jon Simpson whose dedication to law enforcement and community service will be deeply missed following his retirement as chief of the Bentonville Police Department.

Chief Simpson's dedication is grounded in his strong roots to northwest Arkansas as a Bentonville native and graduate of the University of Arkansas. He established a career in public safety, first in the security division of Walmart Stores, Inc., before transitioning to work for the city as a patrol officer in 1994, where his service quickly stood out. After only 2 years with the Bentonville Police Department, Jon was named officer of the year.

From there, the chief held numerous supervisory positions and led by example, inspiring officers in both the patrol and criminal divisions. He was promoted to a command staff member in 2006 and, in 2011, was appointed chief of the Bentonville Police Department. In these leadership roles, Chief Simpson reorganized the rank structure of the department, added personnel with further opportunities for advisory positions, and upgraded the department's vehicles and equipment. Additionally, he led an extensive renovation to the police department building that added a bomb squad facility, emergency communication center, criminal investigations building, and emergency operations center.

The Bentonville community's rapid growth and unique challenges certainly shaped Chief Simpson's tenure. He recognized

the high expectations of Bentonville citizens and was encouraged to do more to ensure his officers lived up to those standards. That approach led to the incredible level of safety and security within the Bentonville community today. Chief Simpson's impact has also been recognized beyond his own department. Recently, the Arkansas Fraternal Order of Police in Little Rock recognized him with its Outstanding Police Chief Award.

Chief Simpson has demonstrated a relentless pursuit to improve himself, his team, and the community he served throughout his career. I applaud his dedicated, decades-long commitment to law enforcement and the safety of his fellow Arkansans. He is a true public servant who has strengthened law and order in Bentonville. It has been an honor to work with him during his tenure, and I wish him all the best in his next endeavor.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENDAN O'NEILL

• Mr. COONS. Madam President, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant of the First State, an attorney, community leader, and friend to many, who this summer concludes a distinguished legal career of more than 45 years.

Attorney Brendan O'Neill of Wilmington, DE, wore many hats during his career: county and Federal prosecutor, a criminal defense lawyer in private practice, and chief public defender.

Delaware is known as a State of neighbors, and when it comes to Brendan O'Neill, there is no better neighbor. Brendan was, for a decade, my actual next-door neighbor, and we even studied and took the Delaware bar exam together in 1992.

Looking back on his long legal career, Brendan reminded his wife, Liz O'Neill, about all of the positions he has held over the years.

"I've had a very interesting professional life. It's been a lot of fun," Brendan said, adding as he often does, jokingly, "I've done everything but make money."

Brendan has had a truly remarkable run. Before I offer some sentiments and well wishes from family and friends, it is only appropriate to chronicle his career.

After graduating from the UC Davis School of Law in 1975, Brendan became a prosecutor in the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, transitioning later to a Federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office there.

Following those early years, Brendan started a criminal defense practice, O'Neill and Young, in Santa Monica, which overlooked beautiful Palisades Park and the iconic beach on Ocean Avenue. That practice, cofounded with his college friend, Wayne Young, operated from 1979 to 1993.

It was then, Liz said, that Brendan was "deported from California" to

Delaware, where he landed a position as a lawyer in the civil division of the Delaware Department of Justice.

In 1995, Brendan launched what would become a 26-year career in the Delaware Public Defender's Office. In May 2009, Governor Jack Markell tapped Brendan to be the chief public defender, a position of trust he fulfilled for 12 years.

"Brendan O'Neill was a fierce advocate for his clients and a key proponent for the right of all accused to have a competent defense," former Governor Markell said. "His was one of the most important nominations I ever made, and I'm not the least bit surprised he is widely recognized as having been a highly effective public defender. Delaware is better for his service, and I am proud to be associated with this intelligent, joyful, passionate, and competent leader. I have no doubt he will continue to be a widely respected member of the Delaware community in retirement."

During his 12 years as Delaware's chief public defender, Brendan and his team overhauled the system for providing indigent criminal defense by creating the office of defense services, or ODS, which now includes the public defender's office and the office of conflicts counsel.

Brendan implemented the practice of vertical representation statewide in all courts. Attorneys with ODS successfully challenged the constitutionality of Delaware's death penalty statute. He acquired additional office space for ODS's Kent County and Sussex County practices and increased the focus on holistic defense to address clients' ongoing needs and issues.

On top of those accomplishments, ODS was voted as one of the best workplaces in Delaware for 10 consecutive years.

Being a public defender is not an easy job. People outside of the legal profession often asked Brendan how he could represent folks who allegedly committed terrible crimes. Liz said that she was often curious about that herself, knowing the nature of his responsibility.

Brendan generally responded, Liz said, by reminding folks that public defenders represent people who were accused of crimes and that the American legal system was founded on the presumption of innocence. Brendan often made the analogy that we don't want doctors who chastise us about how we got our medical condition. We want doctors who listen to us and help us with our problems.

The same goes for lawyers. We want them to fight for us, Brendan said, and help us get the best possible outcome. He often has held that there is no greater pressure than representing an innocent person. As a defense attorney, the facts are often not on your side, so you do the best you can to put on your case.

Brendan's career is full of people he has helped in very stressful situations,